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# COURIER FOR NORTH TELLS OF CARRYING CASH FOR CONTRAS

## HOUSE PANEL HEARS AIDE

### Ex-Senate Staffer Also Links White House Employee to Effort to Help Rebels

**By FOX BUTTERFIELD**  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 14 — A former Senate aide who worked as a courier for Lieut. Col. Oliver L. North testified today that he carried cash from Colonel North's White House safe to Nicaraguan rebel leaders in Washington and Central America.

The courier, Robert W. Owen, a key operative for Colonel North who has not spoken publicly before, said he delivered the cash in 1984 and 1985 at a time when Congress had prohibited Government aid to the Nicaraguan rebels.

Mr. Owen also said Johnathan S. Miller, a mid-level White House aide serving as deputy assistant to the President for administration and management, helped transfer cash on occasion. Mr. Miller was a State Department official on loan to the National Security Council at the time.

#### White House Aide Said to Quit

As a result of Mr. Owen's testimony, Mr. Miller resigned this evening, according to a White House official. A spokesman said the White House had advised Mr. Miller to seek legal counsel.

Mr. Owen's testimony was the most explicit evidence so far in the Congressional hearings into the Iran-contra affair demonstrating that Colonel North played a key tactical role in organizing and directing Nicaraguan rebel military activities. Mr. Owen described Colonel North as the contra "quarter-master."

As Mr. Owen testified, the White House issued a statement contending that laws barring American aid to the Nicaraguan rebels for two years never limited President Reagan's "Constitutional and historical power" to manage the nation's foreign policy. The statement's strong implication was that any efforts by the President to raise money for the rebels, known as contras, were

not illegal.

Mr. Owen's testimony today was the first time Mr. Miller had been linked to Colonel North's activities.

#### Meeting in the White House

Mr. Owen described how Colonel North, in a meeting "right outside the White House situation room" in 1985, had given him maps prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency or the Defense Department to take to the rebels. Mr. Owen said Colonel North intended the maps to be used for a contra military operation.

At the time, such tactical assistance was covered by a Congressional ban.

On other occasions, Mr. Owen testified, he had cashed traveler's checks furnished him by Colonel North and given the money to contra leaders in nighttime meetings in cars in Washington.

The payments amounted to \$6,000 or \$7,000 at a time, Mr. Owen testified. Mr. Miller helped with these payments, he said, because "it was felt there were probably too many checks for me to cash, so he did cash some traveler's checks" totaling about \$3,000 in value.

#### Hamilton Faults Reagan

Earlier in today's hearings, Representative Lee H. Hamilton, the Indiana Democrat who is chairman of the House select committee, charged that the real responsibility for Congress having been given misleading testimony about the Administration's role in helping the contras lay with President Reagan.

Speaking to Robert C. McFarlane, a former national security adviser who was ending four days of testimony, Mr. Hamilton said he admired Mr. McFarlane's attempt to accept blame for the incorrect testimony, which Mr. McFarlane had given. "But I cannot accept that answer," Mr. Hamilton said.

In other testimony today, Gaston J. Sigur Jr., the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, said he had solicited \$2 million in aid for the contras at Colonel North's request from a country Congressional investigators identified as Taiwan. Mr. Sigur said he requested the money, paid in two \$1 million installments in 1985, after Colonel North assured him the action was legal.

At the time Mr. Sigur, an Asian specialist, was director of Asian affairs at the National Security Council, working for Mr. McFarlane.

Mr. Owen, a graduate of Stanford University and a former aide to Senator Dan Quayle, Republican of Indiana, said he had become involved in working for the contras when contra leaders approached Gray & Company, a prominent Washington public relations firm where he was employed in 1984. Gray & Company did not want the contras as an account, he testified, but after talking to Colonel North, whom he already

knew, he decided to help put together a plan to buy weapons for the contras, using his own time and money.

After a series of visits to Costa Rica and Honduras in 1984, Mr. Owen said, Mr. Calero hired him for \$2,500 a month, plus expenses. "My job description was very fluid," he said, and he described himself as acting mainly as a courier, using the code name "T.C.," for The Courier.

#### Equipment in Nicaragua

In November 1984, Mr. Owen said, during a meeting in Colonel North's office in the Old Executive Office Building next to the White House, Colonel North had given him maps and photos. They were to be used "to destroy some military equipment" in Nicaragua, he said.

Colonel North told him the material came from "across the river," Mr. Owen said, meaning either the C.I.A. or the Pentagon, both of which have their headquarters across the Potomac in Virginia. He said he was not sure which.

Mr. McFarlane's concluding testimony this morning added little of significance to what he had said during his first three days at the witness table. More notable than the questions and Mr. McFarlane's answers were statements made about the Administration's foreign policy by two highly regarded Democratic Representatives, Mr. Hamilton of Indiana and Ed Jenkins of Georgia.

Mr. Hamilton not only is chairman of the House investigative panel, he is also the second-ranking Democrat on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Mr. Jenkins is the only Democratic member of the House investigative committee who, according to party leaders, was selected for the panel solely because of his ability and not because of his committee chairmanship or his position in the leadership.

#### 'Discrepancies' in Testimony

Mr. Hamilton began by pointing to several occasions in the past when Mr. McFarlane, by his own admission, had misled Congress about the Reagan Administration's activities on behalf of the contras. The chairman said he was disturbed by "the clear discrepancies between what you and others in the Administration told the Congress that the Administration was or was not doing and what, in fact, was done."